

(B.)

CUSTOM HOUSE, LONDON,
18th March, 1852.

SIR,

Her Majesty's Government having, in consequence of the changes which have recently taken place in the fiscal and political system of Her Majesty's Possessions abroad, determined upon transferring the Customs Establishments at the Colonies named below*, which have hitherto been under the control and superintendence of this Board, to the management of their respective Colonial Governments :

We herewith transmit for your information, copy of a Minute of the Lords of the Treasury, dated 25th June, 1850, as well as a copy of a despatch of Earl Grey to the respective Governors of those Colonies, dated the 8th August, 1850, explanatory of his Lordship's views in regard to the contemplated change. We also transmit a copy of a letter from the Lords of the Treasury, dated 19th March, 1851; and of a letter from Mr. Cornwell Lewis, dated the 3rd May, 1851, transmitting a copy of a despatch from Earl Grey to the Governors of those Colonies, dated the 19th of April, 1851, in further explanation of his Lordship's views.

From the last named despatch of Earl Grey, you will observe that the original intentions of Her Majesty's Government have been so far modified, that, instead of selecting officers for the present Customs establishments, for the express purpose of solely discharging the duties of Controllers of Customs and Navigation Laws, Her Majesty's Government have determined that the present Customs establishments shall be transferred, as they at present exist, to the control and management of their respective Colonial Governments, with the understanding that those officers shall discharge the duties which now devolve generally upon the Imperial Controllers of Customs and Navigation Laws in North America, and furnish, as heretofore, the accounts of Trade and Navigation, which are required by the Inspector General of Imports and Exports, and the Registrar General of Shipping in London, to enable them to prepare the accounts which are required to be laid before Parliament.

And in obedience to the directions of the Lords of the Treasury, and for the purpose of enabling you to discharge the several duties which Her Majesty's Government have imposed upon the officers of your port, for the protection of imperial interests, we have transmitted to their Lordships, for the purpose of being forwarded to the Governor of New Zealand, our deputations, constituting you, and the officers named in the annexed list, Controllers of Customs and Navigation Laws, as well as instructions (copy of which is herewith annexed), for your and their guidance, in discharging the duties of the said office. And we direct you, upon the receipt of this communication, to place yourself in communication with the Governor of New Zealand, with the view to the establishment of Customs, hitherto under our superintendence, being transferred to the management of the Colonial Government, from such period as may be determined upon by his Excellency; up to which period you will make up your accounts, and transmit them to this country for final examination and audit. And you will take the necessary steps for transferring to the Colony all goods which are at present deposited in bond for security of Colonial Customs' duties at your port; reporting your proceedings to us, as well as any matters which you may deem fit for our cognizance, arising out of the contemplated change.

In carrying out this important change, points of detail may no doubt arise, upon the system first coming into operation, which may not have been provided for by our instructions. In the event, however, of any such contingency arising, we rely upon your intelligence and experience, in order that no inconvenience may arise to the public service; and that you will in the mean time, and pending a reference to us for further directions, exercise your discretion in meeting any difficulties of the nature adverted to, by a reference to the manifest intentions of Her Majesty's Government, and the spirit of our general instructions.

(Signed)

{ T. FREMANTLE,
G. E. N. DAWSON,
J. GOULBURN.

The Collector of Customs at Auckland.

* Cape of Good Hope, Port Natal, Mauritius, Ceylon, New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, Melbourne, New Zealand, Adelaide, Sierra Leone, Gambia, and St. Helena.